National Recreational Trails Program

Purpose

Walking and hiking are the most popular activities in Washington with an estimated 53 percent of the population taking part. While not everyone prefers to hike in the woods, statistics from an Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation survey show that about 275,000 or nearly 5 percent of Washingtonians hike in the woods at least once a year.

Add to that another 262,000 people who venture into the woods on bicycles, horses, motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, and you have more than 9 percent of the population who visit mountains and forests for recreation.

Winter sports, such as snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiles, bring another nearly 250,000 people, or 4 percent of the population, to the great outdoors.

To accommodate these sports, the National Recreational Trails Program provides funding to maintain trails and facilities that provide a backcountry experience. Maintenance of recreational trails, development of trail-side and trail head facilities, construction of new trails, and operation of environmental education and trail safety programs are all eligible projects.

The Skykomish Ranger District in Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest used a $50,000 grant to rebuild 6.8 miles of trail within the heavily used Alpine Lakes Wilderness in King County.

Accomplishments

Since beginning in 1994, the National Recreational Trails Program has provided $7.25 million in grants to 245 projects.

While a match of 20 percent is required, grant recipients have far exceeded that by contributing more than $10 million or 59 percent of total project costs in matching funding, labor, and equipment costs.

Grant Evaluation Process

Grant applications are evaluated in a competitive process by a team of recreational trail users that typically includes hikers, equestrians, bicyclists, off-road vehicle users, snowmobilers, skiers, and representatives from natural resource agencies.

Who Can Apply?

- Nonprofit organizations
- Local governments, including
  - Cities, towns, counties
  - School districts
- State agencies
- Tribes
- Federal agencies

Funding by Recipient
Percent of $7.25 Million in Funding
1994-2004

Federal 50%
Local 33%
State 17%

Where Does the Money Come From?

Federal gasoline taxes attributed to recreational, non-highway uses. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation through the Federal Highway Administration and the state Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation.
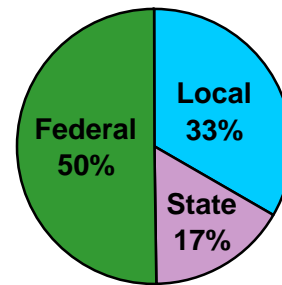
The Methow Ranger District in the Okanogan National Forest used a $46,000 grant to rebuild a bridge at Cutthroat Lake, near Winthrop.

Grant Recipients

Local Agencies & Nonprofits
Anacortes
Apple Country Snowmobile Club
Backcountry Horsemen of Washington
Benton County
Bremerton Cruisers Motorcycle
Butte Busters Snomobile Club
Chinook Trail Association
Clallam County
Clark County
Coal Mines Trail Commission
Corps of Engineers-Clarkston
EarthCorps
Foothills Rails to Trails Coalition
High Country Cruisers
Issaquah Alps Trail Club
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Jones Creek Trail Riders Association
Junco Snowmobile Club
Kitsap Land Trust

Lake Cle Elum Ridge Ryders
Loup Loup Ski Education
Methow Valley Snowmobile Association
Methow Valley Sport Trail Association
Mount Tahoma Trails Association
Mountain Trails Grooming Association
Nooksack Nordic Ski Club
Pacific Northwest Trail Association
Palisades
Peninsula Trails Coalition
Sky Riders Snomobile Club
Snohomish County
Trout Unlimited Gray Harbor
Vancouver Snobusters
Volunteers for Outdoor Washington
Washington Trails Association
Washington Wilderness Coalition
Whatcom County
Winter Knights Snowmobile
Yakima Greenway Foundation

State and Federal Agencies
Washington Department of Natural Resources
National Park Service
- Olympic National Park
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
U.S. Forest Service
- Gifford Pinchot National Forest
- Idaho Panhandle National Forest
- Mount Baker National Forest
- Okanogan National Forest
- Wenatchee National Forest